1493

Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

Vol. VIII.—No. 46. NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, JULY 2, 1892. Whole No. 228.

"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light wherebly the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

The promised letter from Merlino, the Communist, has never been received. His failure to send it is probably to be explained by the appearance of a new journal, "Solidarity," of which I take Merlino to be the editor. He has evidently concluded that it will take more than a month's sojourn in America and a single letter to Liberty to crush out Individualistic Anarchism, and therefore has started a fortnightly organ of Communism in the English language. Of which more anon.

Renan is credited with the utterance of the following sentiment in a recent conversation: "Zola! Nay, Monsieur, you must not ask me about him, for I have no opinion on him It is low, far away, beneath. It is the mud, and a pity for French literature. I have a horror for what is coarse." Yet only a few weeks ago, at a meeting of the French Academy, to which Renan belongs, ten out of thirty-nine immortals voted to immortalize this mud by making its author the fortieth. What filthy fellows these must be,—Dumas, Coppée, and the rest! I congratulate Renan upon his associates. This man is less happy in describing others than in describing himself. Zola's name may be mud or it may not; that is a matter on which opinions differ. But when Renan once characterized himself as "a priest miscarried," no one ever disputed him.

A copy of the French translation of Comrade Mackay's book, "The Anarchists," has reached this office, and right glad am I to see it. It cannot fail to do good work in France. It is a rather free translation, but seems on the whole a good one. There are some blunders however, and among them one so ludicrous and confusing that it must be pointed out straightway. In the original German the author refers in several places to the New York "Freiheit." The innocent French translator, supposing this to be a German rendering of the title of a paper published in New York in the English language, and knowing that *freiheit* is the German word for liberty, takes pains in every case to render the title in English, thus making the author speak of "the Liberty of New York." As a result, poor Mackay is made to condemn Liberty, the organ of the very opinions which his book is written to champion. I can imagine the expression on his face when he first saw this blunder. Before a man undertakes the translation of a work on Anarchism, he should familiarize himself with its literature sufficiently to know the difference between two journals so nearly diametrically opposite as Liberty and John Most's "Freiheit."

With the editors of newspapers and magazines it is a general rule that the availability of a manuscript is inversely proportional to the ability of the author. If this rule is not observed in the office of Liberty, it is only the better proved by the exception. So long as the rule shall stand, it will give Liberty great pleasure to serve as a receptacle for the refuse of its contemporaries. A sample of this refuse is to be found in the article on "Political Duty," begun in this issue and to be printed in four instalments, which it rescues from the waste-basket of the "Arena." To find such excellent material in such a place is rather discouraging, except from the scavenger's standpoint. It is not surprising to discover glittering gold in the dirt-heaps of orthodox magazines like the "Forum" and "North American Review," but when such a nugget is cast out of the liberal "Arena," one wonders why, and begins to doubt its liberality. The "Arena" has never yet published an Anarchistic article. It has purchased several, to my knowledge, but they remain buried in its pigeon-holes. Meanwhile it finds plenty of room for the wearisome vaticinations of Dr. Joseph Buchanan. What is the reason of this discrimination? Is it pretended that Mr. Perkins' article on "Political Duty," for instance, deals with an unimportant subject, or that it is uninteresting, or that it lacks thoughtfulness? Undoubtedly not. The subject speaks for itself, and every reader who follows the article to the end will testify that it is the product of careful thought presented in a serious yet entertaining way. I dislike to impute unworthy motives to the managers of a magazine which is really doing a liberalizing work, but I cannot understand its policy towards Anarchism unless it is either unwilling or afraid to give that cause a hearing. And if that be the case, it is no longer an Arena.

How Monopoly Works in Italy.

[New York Evening Post.]

A curious instance of the extremes to which State Socialism has gone in Italy is the extraordinary care taken by various professions to secure an absolute monopoly and prevent competition. Thus a surgeon is forbidden under severe penalties to pull a tooth without a special license as a dentist. Pharmacists are well protected also, as will be seen from the experience of a certain physician who was treating a case of malarial fever. The quinine which he prescribed not having the expected effect, he took the trouble to analyze it, and found it to consist mainly of magnesia. He denounced the dishonest druggist, but that worthy was under the protection of a local boss, and the physician was severely rebuked by the authorities for his misdirected zeal and threatened with the loss of his position as village doctor unless he ceased to meddle with affairs that did not concern him. He naturally did not wish to lose his place, but neither did he wish to lose his patient, and accordingly he obtained some pure quinine from a friend and cured the sick man. But the druggist got wind of this and had the physician arrested for illegally dealing in drugs, and the latter would have been severely punished had not the patient sworn that he had never taken any quinine except that put up by the honest pharmacist.

True Love.

What is true love? Is it this:
Only on one mouth to kiss?
Only on one breast to lie?
Only for one touch to sigh?
Only in one soul to be
Shrined in love's idolatry?
To have and hold a human heart
Sole for self, a slave, apart?
Is this true love? It may be;
It is not true love to me.
Love most true is this, I deem:
To, in love, be what I seem;
To be always true to trust,
Though the years go back to dust;
To be like a harboring bay,
Where my loves, at anchor, may
Lie forevermore, secure,
In a love that will endure;
To speak, in love, the simple truth
Tenderly, in manly ruth
Of a woman's agony,
Should Love speak deceivingly;
To be always frank and clear
To the hearts that hold me dear,
Though they love, and love again,
Others of the sons of men,
Though the lips that I may know
On still other lips may glow,
Though another love is first,
My love must not be the worst.
What my lovers love to me
Appeals for generous sympathy.
As they change not, nor will I,
But will give the sure reply.
Making answer aye the same,
When in love they speak my name,
When they call me, calling clear:
"Love, O hear me!" . . . . "I am here!"
. . . . . .
This is true love, large and free,
Love's *reliability*.

I. Wm. Lloyd.

Toleration.

What is your stature? Tell me, O my love,
And I shall know where your horizon lies,
With level line the world's edge to your eyes,
Ultimate truth for you that does not move.
Nor do you guess that growth will show you more,
Immeasurable seas and vaster skies,
Which proving ignorance may make you wise,
Hinting to you of strange and unseen shore.
O dear sweet child, if thus you only see
As yet what height you bring to earth and sea and air,
So, in the spiritual world as otherwhere
Your soul's eye can discern but a degree
Of truth that's infinite. Hence do not dare
To judge your fellow like a god aware.

Miriam Daniell.

Liberty.

Issued Weekly at Two Dollars a Year: Single Copies, Four Cents.

BENJ. R. TUCKER, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

Office of Publication, 120 Liberty Street.
Post Office Address: LIBERTY, P. O. Box No. 1312, New York, N. Y.

Entered at New York as Second-Class Mail Matter.

NEW YORK, N. Y., JULY 2, 1892.

"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestige of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the excheaman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all these insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel."—PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

Political Duty: A Confession of Skepticism.

"It is well if the mass of mankind will obey the laws when made, without scrutinizing too nicely into the reasons for making them."—*Blackstone.*

"The great political superstition of the past was the divine right of kings. The great political superstition of the present is the divine right of parliaments."—*H. Spencer.*

"The whole realm of political science is as yet little better than a superstition."—*Patrick Edward Dove.*

The arbitrary barriers which, in the discussion of certain kinds of questions, are set up to narrow the range of argument have been often noted. Experience teaches that some questions are not generally considered debatable throughout, and that against some opinions the strongest probabilities drawn from well-attested facts have no perceptible effect. Toil of the mind is to most people more irksome than toil of the body, to be sure; but furthermore it seems that the toil of examining the foundations of their own beliefs is wholly an unwonted task to many who are, nevertheless, well used to other and severe mental exertion. The very same person who, in discussing questions of convenience in household or business arrangements, of economy in production, and the like, will weigh evidence, balance probabilities, and express opinions with dogmatism, will, oftentimes, when the talk shifts to questions of freedom, fair play, observances, restrictions, and the like, speedily arrive at the arbitrary limits of his thought. To a certain point he is as reasonable as one could wish. Beyond that, he demurs, is angered, perhaps, at what he calls the "infidel," "communistic," or "demoralizing" ideas presented, advances certain narrow generalizations of the conventional sort as if they were self-evident, and, if pushed for reasons, falls back on "the word of God," "well-established customs," "the genius of American institutions," or some similar phrase, or perhaps, changes the subject, or preserves a dignified silence. Some wit has said: "Men's minds are made in water-tight compartments." This is not merely a joke; it is the metaphorical statement of a fact of human nature; and the effect of it is that an irruption of new ideas does not of necessity flood the whole mind, but may have very limited reception and application.

The question I have chosen to bring before the readers of Liberty is one which is often treated in the manner indicated above. Nevertheless, knowing that the temper of my countrymen towards such questions has changed and is changing, and believing that it will long continue to change, I venture to bring it forward, choosing for it, out of several forms which might be chosen, this:

Is there sufficient reason why the people of this country should always obey the lawful commands of their official rulers?

It may be said that the question thus raised is of no present practical importance. It is probably true that its discussion is not likely to have much effect, for a long time, upon the relations between the official classes and the rest of us. It is not certain, of course, that a sheriff, a customs officer, a soldier, or a judge would resign his office, or even change his methods, even if he did become convinced that the performance of its functions was unjust and demoralizing; nor, on the other hand, would a hungry workman, an importing merchant, or a great financier necessarily refrain from unlawful acts because his faith in the existence and rightful authority of the State had been strengthened by argument. Nevertheless, it is highly desirable that on this question, as on others, people should think clearly and reason correctly, and that their prejudices and superstitions, if they have any, should be analyzed, and the opinions derived therefrom be confirmed, modified, or abandoned. The future advantages of such a course are likely to be great; besides, the satisfaction that comes from clear thinking is considerable. Every man, too, is in the midst of powerful social forces, as well as physical forces, and the extent of his knowledge and use of them has much to do with the success or failure of his efforts. A large proportion of the people of this country, as of Europe, are in a condition that calls loudly for careful thought and wise action. The general custom, coexistent with civilization, of respecting and enforcing technical and customary claims to the control of lands, structures, and chattels without regard to the "owner's" use or non-use of them, and also without concern as to whether he or she ever produced their equivalent according to any estimate or not, has resulted (as was inevitable) in the subjection of a considerable part of the people to the continual necessity of hiring from others the space and shelter necessary for dwelling and working* and in very many cases of competing with each other for the privilege of working, wages, in such circumstances, necessarily either falling or (which is almost as bad) failing to rise in proportion to the growth of the productive arts and the expense of decent living. The same custom, in accordance with which some people are privileged to receive and retain goods and services from producers to an amount which is large out of all proportion to any productive work done by the recipients, makes possible a style of living which, on account of the material abundance, leisure, and control that characterize its followers, greatly heightens the contrast in fortunes produced by differences in native and acquired abilities and by circumstances not to be controlled. In such a state of things, it is as natural for men to investigate all projects for escaping the economic evils which follow this custom as for a caged bear to shake his confining bars, and the results of their investigations,

> Which (shall) be to the perfect plan
> What the child is to the man,

may be seen in many directions. Following the instinct of self-preservation, workmen have banded together to resist the external forces which appear to them most hostile to their interests, but though they have sometimes succeeded, by strikes, boycotts, co-operative buying, and so forth, in diverting profits for a time from the pockets of their business adversaries into their own, the limitations of such methods and their slight effect on the general evil so long as greed resists opportunities and men go hunting jobs are only too apparent. It is becoming tolerably clear, now, that measures which do not strike, in some manner, at property-customs are likely to prove inefficient in dealing with the glaring inequalities which naturally spring from property-customs. But, back of all the customs respecting property, and enforcing the unjust customs as well as the just ones, stand the lawmaker, the policeman, the judge, and the soldier; and back of these men is an idea, — the idea that duly qualified officials have a peculiar right to do all that they do lawfully. The importance of this idea as a buttress of the institution of property as it exists is such that it cannot possibly escape the analysis of the humanitarian reformer.

For years have complacent statesmen, like their fellows in the ecclesiastical field, pointed back to the fundamental wisdom of the fathers. For years have eminent jurists, following the example of their ancient authorities, studied precedents, split their hairs of technical distinction, and adjusted the constitutions to the exigencies of class legislation. For years have economists and writers on public questions passed lightly over the anomalies which the concept of the State has introduced into their problems. But the time must come when this question of rightful authority, in republics no less than in monarchies, must run the gauntlet of full and free discussion, and the institutions resting upon it stand or fall by the results.

Obedience to Government officers while in the performance of their peculiar functions is, in this country, a dominant doctrine, and, in the Northeastern States at least, is, with very many people, an article of faith. While there is, in some quarter, much contempt and hatred for certain legalized institutions, it exists usually among people who, for one reason and another, keep their opinions on such matters to themselves. The tavern-keeper, for example, whose profits are directly affected by official restrictions on liquor-selling, seldom "hires a hall," or worries an editor, in order to express himself on the

* Is it a slight thing that the ordinary young man who has to support himself is confronted, at the outset of his responsible career, by the alternative of either leaving his own neighborhood or paying some one else (often an absentee) for the privilege of staying there? Will the poor never cease to respect the claims of vacant-land hoarders and their heirs and assigns?

question of prohibition, but prudently keeps his opinions (which are usually positive and definite) for a small circle of cronies and customers. The politician, too, whose occupation makes him familiar with the hidden parts of the machinery in the local or national statute-factory, and the lawyer, who is well-used to testing the tensile strength of such legislative products, have each his private opinion as to the usefulness of statutes in general and of particular statutes,—but then, such people are not expected to say unpopular things. So it comes to pass that, for the reason concisely stated by Demetrius the shrine-maker when the Pauline gospel was first preached at Ephesus, the men who could enlighten us most as to the practical workings of legalized control, instead of giving us the benefit of their experience, merely voice anew the common sentiments as to the wisdom and gloriousness of American institutions and the supreme duty of every citizen to obey the Law.

As to editors and clergymen, they seem, with rare exceptions, not to know that there can be more than one side to the question. Besides the classes I have mentioned, there are very many persons who are too heavily burdened, or too deeply enslaved to others, to admit of their protesting against the popular dogma, even if they should wish to do so, and very many also who do protest in private, to a certain extent, but are wholly unused to any form of public expression. The ordinary leaders of public opinion have, therefore, been allowed to emphasize their side of the question with comparatively little opposition. That which is agreed upon by the lawyers, the politicians, the clergymen, and the editors is sure to be generally believed. And it is generally believed, and taught, that resistance to lawful authority is wholly inexcusable; that while it is proper and right to agitate and vote for the abolition of laws deemed unjust or unwise, it is improper and wrong, so long as the law holds its place among statutes, judicial decisions, or constitutional provisions, to resist its execution or even to evade it. The mere disobedience of a statutory provision, such as smuggling, for example, is confounded in many people's minds with deeds of actual injustice or cruelty to one's fellow-man, and all are said, without discrimination, to be "wrong" or "criminal." And yet—and yet—I have not, up to this time, found any one able to give anything like a satisfactory reason for this doctrine. The reader shall see the most cogent reasons I have seen, and my comments upon them.

THEO. P. PERKINS.

[To be continued.]

The Gothic Minster.

In these dilettante days, when men aim at self-contained power, and every unit aspires to be not only his own physician, art critic, etc., but also to be his own verse-maker, the copyright of the Muse may be said to have expired. John, Dick, and Emily Jane clothe their sensations in mediocre form, and scratch their brainless polls to see if the laurels are sprouting. Many are the ricketty bastards of rhyme and inanity which immodestly jostle paper-clad Tennyson, or cloth-bound Browning, in the market. For the most part these labored products are swaddled in ruby morocco and regally gilt, to appeal to the æsthetic sense of those who would undoubtedly cremate them but for their fine dress. The ancient Egyptians thought to hand themselves comfortably to posterity. Their gorgeous tombs survived. Small care had their successors for dust and ashes of death therein. Who runs may read.

On the other hand, modesty sometimes conceals true worth too well, and when a new poet peers over the rim of our horizon, we expect him to shine his level best, and not to drape a cloud in front of himself. It is his duty to announce himself, and ours to judge if he is worth our attention. "The Gothic Minster, A Poem," by Harry Lyman Koopman, is a sixteen-page pamphlet in ephemeral covers which in no way advertise or fitly frame its great burden. We share Thackeray's aversion to tracts and booklets. Nevertheless, we forgive the American poet at once, when he takes us with the first note to the colossal cathedrals of old Europe, and gives us then, and after, the general idea of their architecture, reproducing, with artistic ease in our minds the emotion which the writer himself experienced in viewing them. He pictures his subject in storm, in gentle contrasting moonlight, and then bids you

> stand before the minster when high noon
> Throws its revealing light on tower and wall;
> The airy structure hardens into stone;
> Not all forgetful of the mountain form
> It wore in darkness, nor the winged grace
> And lightness of that moony masonry;
> Yet plainly work of man, man at his best,
> Highest aspiring and most self-forgetful,
> Therefore most self-revealing. Then, what self?
> The genius of what master intellect
> Shines here by baser hands wrought visibly?
> No mighty genius and no baser hands,
> But common lives by faith and art exalted.

At this point the first entrancing rapture at so much beauty passes, and the old perplexing questions look at him and at you from the enormous structure. It becomes a note of interrogation.

> But, if the greatness was not theirs that wrought,
> What mastering motive so informed their lives
> As through such lowly means to win expression?
> Religion 'twas, and art its ministrant,
> The records answer; but the question comes,
> If unto them the word religion spake
> As in our ears to-day? In every age
> Bears not the word its new significance,
> Or meanings manifold, though under all
> Abide the root and spring of all religion,
> The loneliness and longing of the soul
> Orphaned of its ideal?

The inner eye holds perfection, and the outer world reveals "crudeness, failure, death, decay"; everywhere injustice apparently succeeding, "force on earth usurps the place of right." The grieved heart

> has vision in its inmost shrine
> Of love illimitable, its native air,
> Its birthplace and its bourne; but sees on earth
> Man's hand against his brother, hate and greed
> Making the world a shambles, or a den
> Of famine and of torture; yea! the lesson,
> Learned after centuries, that 'tis thriftier
> To coin a brother's heart's blood, drop by drop,
> Than spill it wastefully by the swift sword.

Notwithstanding the negative appearances of life, the soul "resounds eternal yea" and recoiling on itself beholds "the infinite brought down to human ken." Since, however, some souls cannot always soar, and not all have strength to wing so high,

> Men wrought them symbols that should reproduce
> The shadowed glory.

Once more the sculptured music has ascendency, and the poet's eye follows the forms in loving sympathy, while the motives inwrought even in details do not escape him. Each stone, each part, the whole climbing and aspiring to Heaven, pointing to the Infinite, lightening itself for higher flight till

> Swifter the spire shoots up, then suddenly
> Stops, and in the rose-cross blossoms forth
> For rapture of the beatific vision.
> So finds the life of man its rest in God.

But even here, upon the crowning cross, the perplexing questions reassert themselves insistently: "Where finds it?" And the Minster vaguely answers: "Yonder, never here on earth."

> Finds what life?
> The heart still urges, and for answer given
> Receives the beckoning of the sculptured portal,
> With heart upturned and chastened soul go in;
> The world shuts down behind, and thou art left
> Alone in presence of the ineffable.

Here in the unreal atmosphere, in the glory and the gloom, the senses sleep, lulled by the rainbow light and soothed by the deep organ tones, mesmerized by the magnificence.

> Where and when
> Have lost their meaning to the mind entranced,
> Yea, self itself is lost; the weary soul,
> After long flight, within the bosom rests
> Of the eternal, as the spray-flung drop
> Sinks back in ocean's immensity.

How retrace the path to earthly life? The familiarity of the forms of beauty takes the mind to the worker who wrought so lovingly with chisel and hammer in the olden time. Fancy sees him

> On Sunday with his children wandering
> In wood and field, and noting form and poise
> Of flower and leaf and stem.

Here no doubt some, who have been hitherto with the poet in his imaginative interpretation, will take issue with him, remembering that the history of genius and of art rather tends to favor the theory that the greatest accomplishments have been the fruit of energy conserved for work and not expended in sexuality, or exhausted by the toil of procreating and rearing a family. These venerable piles, such folk may say, were probably wrought for the most part by force of chastity. This is a side point on which we must not just now dwell. No one will disagree at any rate with the statement that joy was in the workman's art, and that now pleasure belongs not to the laborer. The art is in abeyance. But, given the art, still no cathedrals could arise, for the faith that builded them is dead.

> That faith is dead which made the earth a waste,
> And man's life but a desert pilgrimage
> O'er burning sands and flinty shards to find
> Beyond its bounds a Paradise and rest.
> That faith is dead which in the body saw
> Only the spirit's prison, a house of sin,
> To be escaped from, not indwelt with joy.
> That faith is dead, with its black pessimism,
> Which deemed this world the devil's world, and then,
> That men might not die wholly in despair,
> Fashioned a heaven for earth's apology.

At last men see that, whatever the unfathomable future holds for them,

> Yet is this earth his home, the theatre,
> Where, and not elsewhere, he must play his part;—
> So much is sure; the rest is dread or hope.

Has the old faith prepared them to receive this knowledge? Alas! Some kill their fellows, some declare the dead faith lives,

> But most men to themselves seem aimlessly
> Hurrying to and fro and finding naught.

"Yet," says the seer clear-sighted from the minster tower, "they seem to move in common"; and the sight awakens joy within his breast. What the new life shall be he will not wholly surmise. But in part he sees the tendency of the masses below.

> Away from hate,
> Away from violence, men slowly draw,
> And leave behind the huddling fear of force
> Which sinks in mass the individual.

Here at last the universal interest culminates. The climax must not be marred by any further quotations for those who will be readers of the poem as a whole. The highest flight is gained but there is no sudden stopping of song and swooned lark-like fall to earth, no abrupt closure. In strength and unabated enthusiasm, through history cautiously descending, we reach once more the low-lying ground, stronger in hope and courage, unfatigued by our study of the Gothic Minster.

What Mr. Koopman has written in the past the writer does not know; what he may utter in the future does not make or mar this work. A fragmentary torso reveals the master's hand to such as love their art. After all, size is only of value to the ignorant, who measure paintings by the mile. A small drawing of a Lion in the Louvre by Da Vinci is so much more the king of beasts than Briton Riviere's large painting that, put the two alternately in front of a giraffe, there is little doubt it would bolt at the Da Vinci inch and not the Riviere yard. To our thinking there is more appearance of a lion of Revolution in this tiny study to frighten usurers than in roaring volumes of blood and thunder. And as such we treat it with care; the main body is beyond praise and blame, but we pull the

lion's tail or criticise the cut of his mane. Hence it may be remarked that the passionate praise of the old Church is of course very obvious by the American position, and it may be inferred that Lyman Koopman visited them and did not dwell in their unwholesome mouldering shadow. To people who are born and bred beside them they emit the nuisance and pestilential odors of dissolution figuratively and actually. Within them the priests still drone the psalms, and intone the faultless service. Outside, as Edward Carpenter says in his "York Minster," "the people are dying of cold and starvation. A nation is dying . . . Rotting down piece meal, lethargic even in its misery, weary and careworn even in its luxury, to the grave."

The Church has failed to meet the growing needs of Humanity and is remote from all latter-day problems. Art was the tool of priestcraft. It strove to express on that plane the sublimest religious ideals, and necessarily failed because it arrested them. It at once vulgarized and put a boundary line to them. It could only exalt from nature by monstrous combinations of natural forms. Moreover, every nook, even of such an Abbey as caps the Rock of St. Michel, is fraught with fear of Liberty and with cruel confining and coercive purpose, from the dungeons and the cage in which the imprisoned were devoured by rats at the base, to the lighter, more subtle torture of tread-mill, etc., established above. Beauty, associated with such hideous inhumanity, ceases to give joy, and there is a healthy, growing indifference to them in the French and English workers. It is possible some day the people who have been sucked of their best blood by vampire clergy will raze to the ground these final and dispiriting minsters, not wholly in a senseless desire to destroy, but in the belief that, by crumbling them, they break the hard shell which keeps the new Art's cotyledons from springing. Man is not less than Man was. Art cannot be extinct till the last being dies. But the art, yet to be, will not exalt, embellish, or sustain authority through the ages over groaning, hoodwinked humanity.

It will, so far as one can see, bend its energies towards the perfecting and beautification of the individual's home, expressing and adorning his freedom, a freedom gladly seen and hailed by Lyman Koopman, whose effort, not new in matter, but fresh in synthesis and treatment from the Anarchic basis, should be read by every lover of Liberty.

MIRIAM DANIELL.

MONEY.

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Translated by Benj. R. Tucker.

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